

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ross called the special teleconference-only meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Planning & Building Director Laura Russell called roll:

Present: ASCC: Commissioners Al Sill, Kenny Cheung and Jane Wilson, Vice Chair Koch and Chair Dave Ross

Absent:

Planning Commission Liaison: Anne Kopf-Sill

Town Council Liaison: Maryann Derwin

Town Staff: Planning & Building Director Laura Russell; Consulting Planner, Jake Garcia

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

- (1) **Architectural Review of an application for a new spa, deck, pathway and minor alterations to the main residence in the Blue Oaks Planned Unit Development, File # PLN ARCH00021-21, APN 080-241-360, Toor (J. Garcia)**

Jake Garcia, Consulting Assistant Planner, presented the staff report on the project at 2 Buck Meadow Drive, first pointing out a couple of corrections to the staff report. The provided project data table on page three of the staff report (packet page 6) should indicate that the existing lot coverage is 3,695 square feet and not 4,010 square feet. The remaining lot coverage is 1,690 square feet, not 5,990 square feet. The existing impervious surface is 4,136 square feet, not 4,010 square feet; and the proposed impervious surface is 4,886 square feet, not 4,010 square feet.

Mr. Garcia presented site information. The 134,598-square-foot lot is zoned Residential Estate, located along Buck Meadow Drive, and within the Blue Oaks HOA. The property is surrounded by other residential properties in the same zoning district and property dedicated as Open Space easement abuts the rear property line of the site. The property is slightly sloped throughout, and the building envelope for the site is located at the rear of the property due to an existing pathway easement, storm drain easement, Private Open Space Easement, Slope Easement, and a known fault trace located at the front of the property closest to Buck Meadow Drive.

The property is located within the Blue Oaks HOA. In addition to the Town's Municipal Code and Design Guidelines, the site is also subject to requirements of the Blue Oaks Planned Unit Development statement (PUD). The Blue Oaks' PUD in the case of the project, which proposes fences, entry features and other features as otherwise permitted by the Blue Oaks PUD may extend into the building envelope; however, when those sites features are proposed outside of the building envelope, they are subject to ASCC for review and approval.

Mr. Garcia shared the existing and proposed conditions, as well as the corrected project data table. The property is developed with an existing two-story residence and a guest cottage. The existing site improvements include a drive court with guest parking, site paths, landscape plantings, and a six-foot wire fence at the rear of the property. The guest parking, portions of the site paths, and the six-foot wire fence were previously approved by the ASCC in 2010, and allowed to encroach outside of the building envelope. The applicant proposes new landscaping in the rear of the main residence yard and minor modifications to the main residence.

Landscape improvements would include a new curved path coming from the kitchen patio area of the main residence to a newly-proposed above-ground spa and deck. Where the path is most curved it extends outside of the building envelope and is approximately 33 feet, 3 inches, from the rear property line, shared with the Open Space. Additionally, the area outside of the building envelope for 2 Buck Meadow is considered a Public Open Space Easement and does allow for the use of trails and paths. In addition to the landscape improvements, the applicant proposes minor modifications to the window and door fenestration at the main residence, resulting in a 4-square-foot increase of the main building. There are no trees proposed for removal.

Regarding proposed site work, the main focus is on the path. Where the path is most curved it extends outside of the building envelope and is approximately 33 feet, 3 inches from the rear property line which is shared with Open Space. The path is proposed to be decomposed granite with five sets of concrete steps along the way. The applicant proposes new patio furniture and lighting along the path. The proposed deck is to be constructed adjacent to the above ground spa. The deck is two-and-a-half feet above grade and would be screened with a 30-inch wood screen to minimize impacts and privacy for neighbors.

The spa and wood deck are located within the building envelope and are 42 feet, 10 inches, from the property line shared with the closest neighbor at 4 Buck Meadow. Where the path connects to the main residence, a small, tiered planter with a shade structure is proposed. The building envelope and existing six-foot wired fence enclosing the proposed work was called out for reference.

Alterations on the main residence include a proposed removal of an existing kitchen door which faces the side yard and adding a new kitchen door that faces the rear yard. Installation of the new door would result in an increase of area of the main residence by four square feet. The project also proposes a new kitchen window where the old kitchen door used to be. The exterior office sliding glass door is proposed to be replaced by a smaller, swinging glass door. This faces the property line which is shared with the closest neighbor. An existing window in the sleeping loft is proposed to be replaced by a larger window on the second floor, relatively interior to the house floor plan and facing the front of the property. At the master bedroom, a window is proposed to be replaced by a window relocated from the kitchen.

The elevations of the spa area show screening proposed for privacy. The colors and materials are proposed to match existing colors and materials. The existing stucco paint color included as "western wear" is not consistent with the Design Guideline reflectivity values; however, all other existing colors and materials are compliant with the Portola Valley Municipal Code development standards and Town's Design Guidelines.

Exterior lighting proposed includes one new downlit sconce to match the existing sconces on the main residence. The project proposes seven new lights along the path, three steps lights on the spa deck stair area and one light in the spa. All of the proposed lighting is dark sky

compliant and is consistent with the Town's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance. Existing lighting near the proposed lighting includes LED wall sconces and recessed lighting at the kitchen patio.

Staff sent notice to all property owners within 300 feet of the project in advance of the ASCC meeting, and the applicant has conducted their own public outreach with neighbors and has provided positive neighbor feedback from three neighbors. No additional public comments were received by staff since the publication of the report.

Chair Ross invited questions of Mr. Garcia from the Commissioners.

Vice Chair Commissioner Koch asked, since it is an above ground spa, if there was any other heating element or pumps, et cetera, that are outside of the unit that would need soundproofing. Mr. Garcia responded that there is some equipment being screened underneath the deck. He said he would yield to the applicant to provide any sound details.

Commissioner Cheung asked to confirm that what's being proposed is compliant with the easements that were described and, secondly, whether there is justification given for the paint color not being compliant with reflectivity requirements. Mr. Garcia said the proposed work outside of the building envelope and in the Public Open Space Easement is consistent with what is allowed, but subject to ASCC review for final approval. Feedback or comments by the ASCC may affect the project work being proposed. Regarding the proposed paint colors, he thought it was approved by the ASCC in 2010. He did not see any discussion in the project files that led to the approval. So, it was approved in the past, and the current proposal is to match to it. Commissioner Cheung said he assumed, since there was a fence further out, that they could interpret that space as a visual open space easement. Mr. Garcia said in regard to fence at the rear of the yard, it is located outside of the building envelope and is a six-foot wired fence which was previously approved with the full site development. The proposed scope of work for the current project would be within that area.

Planning and Building Director Russell added that most of the easements they come across in project reviews are easements that cannot be built in. However, there are different types of easements, and this one in particular can be built in under certain circumstances with ASCC approval. Commissioner Cheung wondered if there was other advice they could provide regarding the purpose of the easement, considering that someone can build in it. Director Russell thought that generally the intent of the Blue Oaks PUD was to provide ample space between lots to provide the open space character between houses. She said that the idea was to have an extra layer of review to make sure encroachments didn't negatively affect that aesthetics and ethos as projects were implement into the future.

Tom Carrubba, Project Architect, clarified that the easement is actually a private open space easement and not a public open space easement. He also added that he was the architect for the original development of the property and the house in 2010, and his understanding is at the time when the paint colors were selected they were in full compliance both with the Town and the Blue Oaks PUD in terms of light reflectivity. The fact that the one color is currently not compliant makes him think that perhaps the Code has changed or light reflectivity value minimums or maximums have changed since 2010.

Chair Ross invited further questions from the Commissioners. Hearing none, he invited the applicants to comment.

Mr. Carrubba stated they feel the project is simple, straightforward, and they were there for any questions or clarifications. He did want to clarify that in Mr. Garcia's presentation and staff report he referred to the privacy panels around the spa deck as being wood. In fact, they are a bronze-colored perforated metal. This is noted in the drawings, but were referred to as a wood screen in the staff report. Vice Chair Koch thought they were Core10. Mr. Carrubba said they were more like a pre-finished bronze-colored metal, although there is some Core10 steel curved in the retaining walls at the terrace planting area outside the kitchen door. The panels are metal that is painted. Vice Chair Koch asked if there was any more information about anything that could be noise-producing, such as heater, pumps, and if there was any sound mitigation for that. Mr. Carrubba said all the equipment for the spa is located directly beneath the spa in an enclosed space with wood siding and solid wood doors, and there is no remote equipment located elsewhere on the property.

Chair Ross invited further questions.

Commissioner Cheung was curious if the bronze paint color was meant to match something else on the property.

John Toor, applicant, responded that the intent was simply to match as close as they could to the Core10 color with the colors available from the company that makes the perforated metal screen. Commissioner Cheung asked if this is within the building envelope and Mr. Toor confirmed this is correct.

With no further questions from the Commission, Chair Ross invited public comments. Hearing none, he opened the item for discussion.

Vice Chair Koch thought it will be an enjoyable space for the homeowner. Control of lighting was not touched on so her suggestion was to make sure the lighting control has some type of timer so that that path lighting is not left on, since Blue Oaks has such a beautiful dark sky environment. She thought it was a lovely use of the space and enjoyment for the homeowner which does not impose on anyone else.

Commissioner Wilson agreed with Vice Chair Koch and felt it is a sensible way to use the outdoor space. She approved of the tweaks to the windows and the main building. She thought the plan allows for better use and enjoyment of the property.

Commissioner Sill agreed that the plan makes sense and is consistent with the Code and Design Guidelines. The lighting is appropriate. The changes to the main house make sense, and he had no issue with any of the outdoor work in the private open space. He felt it was a very clear, well-structured project and he extended kudos to the project team.

Commissioner Cheung concurred with previous comments and the description of the metal panel leads him to believe that they are self-motivated to make it look as good as possible. He said he has personally been disappointed by attempts to replicate Core10 steel with paint, but he feels the applicants will do the best they can and he agreed the project is approvable.

Chair Ross also thought it was a very good application, echoing Vice Chair Koch's comments about controlling the lighting. He commented that with things that are controlled by a simple on/off switch it is sometimes difficult to know if you've left them on if you can't actually see them from inside. He asked the applicant if they have taken that into account with a lighting control plan for the path lights and exterior lights.

Mr. Toor replied they do have a fairly high-end lighting control system on their house now. They would plan to set up the path lights and other exterior lights similarly to their current system for path lights on the other side of the house, which are on a system that automatically turns them off if they are left on after a certain time. They would typically turn them off manually from the controls, but in case they were left on, they would go off automatically along with all of the other lights sometime in the late evening. They are not currently set up on a timer, although it is a viable option with their lighting system. He said he has avoided doing that because it becomes a problem if someone is out there and the lights go off, but they can do whatever is necessary. They have taken this upon themselves even though it was not a requirement in their previous ASCC approval, but he said he does not want the lights on any more than the Commission does.

Chair Ross thought it sounded like they had a good system, and he was satisfied with that, without an additional condition required. He said he was familiar with the panels proposed for screening, and the factory finish applied to them is usually very durable and attractive, so he trusted they had chosen one that works well with their other finishes. He had no difficulty making required findings for the project as shown in the staff report, and felt all of them are easily met. He congratulated the applicant and architect on a well put together project and presentation.

Commissioner Sill moved to approve the project with the conditions outlined in the staff report. Seconded by Vice Chair Koch, the motion carried unanimously, by voice vote.

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(2) Commission Reports

Vice Chair Koch said she has a project coming up which she will share at the next meeting. It is also on Buck Meadow, the vegetation restoration project.

Commissioner Sill gave an update on the Housing Element work. They have met twice since the last ASCC meeting – on February 22nd and February 28th. They were both fairly lengthy meetings and in both cases the main agenda item was site selection for higher density housing locations in town. The main takeaway was some level of discomfort from both the public and committee members on forced up-zoning of single family properties. This was potentially going to be an avenue for getting to the RHNA numbers. This complicates finding a way to meet the RHNA numbers, and it forced a step back to reconsider other options. He said the reality is that it is a very difficult problem. It may be over constrained, but the Planning team is doing a great job trying to come up with solutions to a tough problem with competing concerns from residents and committee members. Progress continues, but it is a difficult and contentious problem.

Chair Ross commented that it is getting much discussion around town. From his perspective of someone who doesn't have to attend the meetings, he thought it was exciting to see the level of public engagement taking place on this. Some of the issues are uncomfortable, and there is nothing easy about it. It is a collision of RHNA requirements and new state ordinances, like SB 9, making for a very complicated set of conditions, not to mention the Town's long history of wanting to be very much in control of the environment. He applauded the entire committee and was appreciative of the report.

Chair Ross reported that there is a minor addition taking place in the Ranch at 2 Ohlone Street – a 284-square-foot addition. There is no new exterior lighting or landscaping. It could have come to ASCC review but didn't appear to him to have any controversial issues and falls below

the normal 400-square-foot threshold for their review. The application seemed very consistent with the existing construction, so he agreed with staff that it did not need to come to the ASCC on a regular agenda.

Chair Ross also looked at proposed decking at 40 Buckeye, which is a replacement of a flammable deck with non-flammable deck and a glass canopy. It was not required to come to ASCC, but staff had asked if it should. He felt it was very straightforward proposal and didn't really need ASCC review. He said he applauds the efforts to convert flammable structures to non-flammable structures, as it is something to be encouraged and great to see.

Vice Chair Koch was interested to hear more about the materials and if it seemed like an easy replacement. Chair Ross responded that it was not an easy replacement. The estimate for the total cost he thought was upwards of a quarter-million dollars – including some additional improvements, the glass canopy trellis-type feature. The entire structure is being replaced with a steel structure, so that alone will be expensive. The decking material he thought was not completely inflammable but has a much higher flame spread rating than wood decking, although he didn't remember the actual product. He thought it also meets the fire hardening code recently implemented. Overall, it is a great application, though not something everyone is in a position to do. Vice Chair Koch said it seems that many of the non-flammable materials require much more engineering and structure, so taking a wood deck and adding tile can be a big project. Chair Ross said there are many ways to improve the fire hardening of an existing deck, but replacing it with steel structure is more profound and expensive in design and construction.

Chair Ross opened public comment on Commission Reports. Hearing none, he closed the item.

(3) Staff Report

a. Update on return to in-person meetings

Planning and Building Director Russell reported that she went before the Council the previous week to talk about overall staffing in the Planning and Building Department, the amount of workload, the budget and how things are going. The volume of work in the Department remains very high. Their building permit workload is much higher than pre-pandemic. They were very conservative in their budgeting last year because of all the unknowns at the time. Even with that, they have been very busy, taking in a year's worth of revenue in six months. There is very high complexity of projects, and a lot of time invested in them. She said as ASCC members, they are probably wondering where the projects have been. She explained that projects bunch up as part of the nature of their work. They were taking more active steps to try to spread them out early in the pandemic so that they could control the volume. They have now taken away some of the controls and things are going back to more of the normal ebb and flow. They have caught up with many things on the Planning side. They have also gotten a commitment from the Council for additional resources for consultant planners for the remainder of the year so that they can continue to improve on timeliness and customer service.

Director Russell said funding is continuing for Mr. Garcia and the other consultant planner, Ralph. She said because of the very important process underway with the Housing Element and Safety Element, they thought it was warranted to backfill some of her time to give her time to focus on those important initiatives. The Council is supporting bringing in an Acting Principal Planner, like a division manager, for six months while the Senior Planner is out on scheduled leave. Essentially, they are moving people around in different positions in order to ensure everything is covered. It is likely the ASCC will start seeing an Acting Principal Planner. Director

Russell will continue to be involved in setting the big picture for the projects, but the Principal Planner will be overseeing the staff reports and attending the meetings. She will keep the Commission apprised.

In terms of long-term resources, the Council has given support for hiring another Development Review Technician, who will be another person to work with Carol and Cheyenne to help process the very high level of workload. They will start recruitment for that at the beginning of the fiscal year, which is July. She said the Council was advised that they could possibly need additional resources depending on how things go, so that they can keep up their level of customer service.

In terms of the big picture, Director Russell said they will be going to Council on March 23rd to talk more about the Housing Element and the resources and options for Council to consider as they are doing this adjustment, to explore more things, do more analysis, and think more about the inventory. This will be another place for anyone interested to look at the staff report. As ASCC member who get comments from friends and neighbors and they can be referred to those resources. If they have questions, they can email them to housing@portolavalley.net.

Director Russell discussed going back to in-person meetings. She said the Town is contracted with a company who is installing physical equipment into the Historic Schoolhouse so that they will be able to have hybrid meetings – both in-person and on Zoom – to keep the best aspects of both of those. The equipment is being installed and will take a few weeks. There will then be some training and transition. By April, they will probably be talking about next steps in terms of going back to in-person meetings. There will probably be some details to work through, so staff's recommendation would be for staff to work with the Chair and Vice Chair as they sort through the details on how the meetings will work. They also expect the Council to give feedback on how it all should come together and help set the tone for how they will conduct their own meetings. The ASCC won't have to do it the same way as Council, but it is nice to have an example from them of what they might like to see. Coordination on that will be done.

Director Russell said the historic meeting times for the ASCC were at 7:00 p.m. in the Schoolhouse. There were site meetings in the afternoon. Director Russell said one of her objectives in moving meetings earlier was to potentially reduce the number of night meetings and see if that was effective or if residents would have concerns about not being able to participate at an earlier time. She has observed that they have not received complaints. She was not aware of any applicants saying that time was not possible for them. One of her goals is to reduce the number of night meetings that staff has, because there are a very high number of staff commitments in the evenings, even compared to similar cities. She hoped to balance that in discussion of meeting times. She said the last time they talked about this, Commissioner Cheung had some interest in changing the meeting time. She said she hoped the Commissioners would bring up any questions or comments. All meetings have been special meetings since the pandemic, and if they want to make any permanent change to the meeting time, she will need to find out what the process is, and they may need to get a quick Council approval of any permanent change to the meeting time.

Regarding site meetings, Director Russell proposed to take what they've learned over the last two years, go back to doing site meetings for projects where they feel it's appropriate and warranted, and then not do site meetings in cases where there may not be as much value coming out of it. There are some logistical legal challenges that go along with having site meetings, so they will need to continue to work with the Town Attorney on that. She said staff recognizes that site meetings are a very valuable part of the process, because every site is

different in Portola Valley, but they would need to work with the Chair and Vice Chair to sort out some details in order to move forward.

Chair Ross invited questions and discussion among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cheung asked if the site visits are problematic from a legal standpoint as distinct from site meetings. Director Russell said they are. If they have scheduled site visits in which ASCC members can go out to the site, then they don't think that is problematic – if they went in small groups that don't constitute a meeting under the Brown Act. If it is an actual site meeting, included on the agenda, and a Brown Act meeting, there has been some concern expressed about that, because it is not accessible, particularly to people with disabilities. There is also always some question around liability pertaining to site visits.

Chair Ross said in the time he has been on the ASCC he could remember one or two times, pre-pandemic, where there was any concern about either the liability or accessibility issues. He wondered if there had been some type of precipitating event within the community or outside the community which has raised the profile of these issues for field meetings, or if it was more of a theoretical concern that has bubbled up as people have had a chance to think about it more. Director Russell said it was a little bit of the first one. It has been in response to some of the larger or more controversial projects the Town has been reviewing. It has also been a chance for people to contemplate and reflect on these meetings since they stopped holding them during the pandemic. So partially it is a reflection of changing times, more legal requirements and more structure around many of the things they do. Chair Ross thought the accessibility requirements have been around for at least 20 years. He didn't recall anyone lodging a concern or complaint about not being able to attend a meeting. It is not a question of demand. He said he was just curious because it didn't seem like this was on anybody's radar a couple of years ago. He also wondered if there would be a way to work out a virtual access in the same way that they have hybrid meetings coming up and if there would be a way to provide visual and audio access remotely for those confined to home or with some other limitation or disability. He hoped that could be on the table as a possibility.

Director Russell said she had thought of something like that, because their normal procedure is that people should notify staff if they would like any accommodation for the meeting. If they could find a way to harness the technology and use it also for a site meeting, people notifying them in advance would be able to participate. She did not think they had to solve all of the issues before going back to site meetings, but she recommended being mindful and to start making improvements over time, to bring themselves more into compliance.

Commissioner Sill looked forward to hybrid meetings as a great step forward. Regarding site visits, he looked forward to getting back to them. The compromise of going in small groups is better than nothing, but he is not wild about them, because they don't tend to get much of a discussion or presentation from the project team as they get with a bigger group. He hoped they can eventually get back to where they were before, because it is a very productive format for the projects that merit it, with the understanding that there is complexity associated with it.

Commissioner Wilson thought site visits were valuable and it would be nice to get out into the fresh air sometimes again. She wondered, when they have the meetings set up as hybrid, if Commissioners will be able to attend remotely if they are away and are able to. At times it has been convenient having the meetings on Zoom. She said the meeting time does suit her better as well, although she wouldn't be averse to the 4:00 time if it everyone else preferred it.

Chair Ross asked if Director Russell had a response to her first question. While they currently are operating under emergency regulations that permit remote attendance, it might be that after the emergency is over that ability goes away. Director Russell did not have the answer to that yet, but said they will have to look into that and will give them an update when the answer is available. Chair Ross agreed it has been nice to be able to participate like that while away, but on the other hand, it makes vacations a little bit less “arm’s length” than they could be otherwise.

Commissioner Sill said his schedule is flexible and he was happy to go with whatever suits everyone else for the meeting time. He understands demands on Planning staff and it’s good to keep it early, but also that Commissioner Cheung has issues as well. He hoped when they go back to hybrid meetings that commissioners can participate remotely, but he understood it will probably depend on guidelines from the State.

Vice Chair Koch thought the site meetings are of great importance and that group site meetings are even more important with all of them together and able to ask questions and give input onsite as a group. As a whole of ASCC, it is much more protective. She thought there should be a way to provide some kind of video interaction remotely, and they should at least look into that. She said when going separately on a visit, you have our own kind of experience. You don’t have all the neighbors. You don’t have a full presentation. She said the one thing that they do great job of is looking at individual sites in Portola Valley, because every site is individual, with the back-and-forth, it is a real communication between the architect, the landscape architect, the homeowners, the neighbors and the ASCC and Planning. It is valuable, and she is excited to get back to that and hoped to find a way to make it accessible. In regard to timing, since she still has some non-drivers in the house, 3:00 is often the pick-up time, so 4:00 is great for the regular meetings. She assumed on site meetings would be between 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. she felt they just need to talk it through to see how feasible that would be. She was excited to see the Commission in person more often.

Commissioner Cheung said he also has non-drivers in his household. Because of this, the 4:45 to 6:30 time slot is when they need to avoid with his wife getting back to work in the office and himself being back to work in the office. It is difficult if the meeting overlaps the 5:45 to 6:30 time period. They anticipated by the time they would be back to work in the office that the meeting time would return to the 7:00 p.m. slot. He said he can make it work with his hours shifting around as long as it doesn’t overlap 5:45 to 6:30. If during the day, it would need to end by 5:45.

Chair Ross noted that Commissioner Cheung’s joining the ASCC coincided almost perfectly with the pandemic, so he has not had the experience that the other Commissioners did. For himself, he said the field meetings were as valuable, if not more valuable than the evening Commission meetings. He asked Commissioner Cheung for his thoughts on those, having been to one individual meeting and one larger, noticed field meeting. Commissioner Cheung said he didn’t have the experience of the rest of the Commissioners with regard to the value of the full meeting versus a visit combined with a meeting. He said he did appreciate the one-on-one time with the homeowners that the site visits afforded, scheduled on the basis of their schedule and his schedule. It was helpful and allowed him to come to the full meeting better informed and with questions perhaps answered better than would be possible in a group setting. He said he did not question the other values that a group meeting could have, but he went into this aware of the pre-existing structure and with a certain comfort level with the time commitment there

Chair Ross commented on his own behalf regarding site meetings. He has found them especially valuable for getting input and feedback from neighbors and other people in the

community. He said this is difficult to arrange in a one-on-one visit. He also thought there are members of the community specific to a particular application that want to do the preparation of actually being on the property, seeing what the visual impact is going to be, and it is hard to get that experience in a regular applicant presentation. It's also a little harder to arrange an individual visit. He also recognized there would be more scheduling challenges with an earlier or mid-afternoon regular meeting, and fitting in field meetings on the same day may be difficult, so there might need to be a different approach to that, also. It might be held on a different day if the applicant and staff were ready for such a meeting. He said his schedule is flexible and he can accommodate whatever the rest need.

Chair Ross invited comments from the public.

Laura Ralston, Commissioner Cheung's wife, felt the 5:45 to 6:30 time period is incredibly difficult and takes five hours out of their joint work week to do that, which was unanticipated. She hoped they could do the two-hour meetings before 5:45 or in the evening. She also foresaw site visits being problematic considering transporting of children to and from daycare. From their perspective, an option to do site visits unsynchronized at different points, such as weekends, would cost less time for their family than during the week between 9 and 6 p.m. She wondered if they could be done during the evenings in the summer. Essentially, it would be a considerable time cost for them and would be difficult.

Chair Ross invited further discussion from the Commissioners.

Vice Chair Koch mentioned when they do have a site visit followed by a regular meeting it is the opportunity for the homeowner to get their whole team into Portola Valley. If they were to distribute the site visit and the Town Hall meeting on different days, it would not be favorable for getting everyone there that they want. She was fine with going back to site meetings and 3 or 4, with the evening meeting at 7:00. She said everyone got very comfortable with Zoom, because being at home, they could still get things done. She felt the site meetings are very valuable. Everyone together, the neighbors, walking the site and going to the neighbor's properties makes a huge difference. Looking at plans may seem one way, but actually setting foot on the ground is different. She wanted to keep the level of understanding and individuality with each project because that is what makes the town the great community it is, where all voices are heard, and everything is taken into account by knowing the exact property.

Planning and Building Director Russell asked Commissioner Cheung if he could attend a meeting at 6:30 or a meeting at 7:00. Kenny responded that he could attend a meeting at 6:30. Director Russell thought that might be reasonable. From staff's point of view it is significantly better to meet at 6:30 than at 7:00, in light of their schedules and the number of night meetings they staff. With the Housing Element and everything else they're doing it makes a real difference for them, so if people were willing to do an afternoon site meeting and a 6:30 p.m. regular meeting in the Schoolhouse, they could test it out and decide whether to make it permanent. If they decide to make it permanent, they would need to determine if they Council approval for that.

Commissioner Sill thought that was a good proposal.

Commissioner Wilson wondered if they were ruling out 4:00 meetings. Director Russell said that is her understanding because they can't always finish in time for Commissioner Cheung to meeting his family obligations.

Chair Ross repeated that he is flexible. There may be rare occasions when he couldn't schedule around that, as they all will. He said when they were doing field meetings, attendance of Commission members was not quite as good as it was for the evening meetings, because occasionally there are those who have work commitments or other commitments. In Commissioner Cheung's case, with his diligence in visiting a site, even if not with the group, it would help alleviate some of the downside of not being able to attend with the group. The only concern might be an occasional lack of a quorum if there were a couple other people who couldn't make a meeting, necessitating cancellation of the meeting. He thought even if they had field meetings that he was sometimes not able to attend because of work or family commitments, it would not be unprecedented in the ASCC. He recalled times when commissioners have had a number of conflicts which kept them from participating in field meeting. He thought they should be flexible in that regard.

Director Russell added, from staff's point of view, they want to make sure that it is as pleasant as possible to volunteer for the Town. They recognize it is sometimes very hard to do their jobs and they want to put back the parts of their jobs that are pleasant. The site meetings, with walking and looking together, are a pleasant part of their jobs as she has observed. The want to be flexible around scheduling for individual commissioners and not burdensome on people. She said she will agendize the discussion at an upcoming meeting. They will have a more detailed timeline for going back to hybrid meetings. She thought there was consensus but it will give everyone a chance to think about it, and they should come back and have a vote.

Chair Ross thought that sounded like a good plan. He asked in regard to upcoming meetings, whether there are some coming up in which they might plan on several hours, or whether they were paced out. Director Russell replied that the things coming up are very routine – a number of regular, single-family projects. They have just completed a couple big things, and it will be a while before Stanford comes before the Commission and a couple other big things come forward. Much of staff's resources have been devoted to the Housing Element and the Safety Element, but staff is doing their regular thing, working with single-family applicants. She said they recently took in several applications, so there might be a little lull for a month or two, and then could get busy again as they are ready for ASCC review.

Chair Ross invited further comments from the public. Hearing none, he closed the item.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(4) ASCC meeting of February 14, 2022

Chair Ross invited public comment on the minutes. Hearing none, he invited a motion to approve.

Motion by Commissioner Wilson to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2022, ASCC meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Sill, the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Commissioners commented on long meetings in the past, and pointed out the Housing Element meeting from the previous week was six-and-a-half hours, with approximately 165 members of the public in attendance and amazing participation.

ADJOURNMENT [5:18 p.m.]